



Delegated decision report

DECISION UNDER DELEGATED POWERS

DECISION CANNOT BE TAKEN BEFORE TUESDAY, 3 JULY 2012

Title	ADULT COMMUNITY LEARNING PLAN 2012/13
Report to	THE CABINET MEMBER FOR CHILDREN'S SERVICES AND EDUCATION

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1. To approve the Adult Community Learning Plan for 2012/13
2. The Adult Community Learning Plan outlines the planned scope and volume of community learning programmes to be delivered during the 2012/13 academic year as contracted by the Skills Funding Agency. The programme covers:
 - Family learning;
 - Community learning programmes including basic skills.
3. If the recommended outcome is approved, the Isle of Wight Council will secure a grant of £319,672.

BACKGROUND

4. In April 2001 and in accordance with government directives, the responsibility and funding for adult learning passed to the local Learning and Skills Council (now the Skills Funding Agency). The Isle of Wight Council is the lead accountable body for identifying local community learning need and for co-ordinating grant funded activity through the Skills Funding Agency (SFA).

The Council will deliver Adult Community Learning around a citizens' curriculum covering the curriculum themes of:

- Family Learning;
 - Health and Well-being;
 - Digital Inclusion;
 - Civic Engagement;
 - Economic Well-being.
5. The council continues to be the main provider of community and family learning programmes for adults on the Island. The range and scale of the services are agreed annually with the SFA and captured in this plan. This plan will serve as a service level agreement with the SFA and sets out how the Council will complement the SFA funding

programme with its own adult community learning activities and those funded and supported by other partner agencies.

6. The SFA has funded the Council at the 2006/07 cash level under the term 'Safeguarded Adult Learning'. This 'safeguard' was extended in the Comprehensive Spending Review until 2014/15.
7. In order to be able to draw down this funding, the council must submit in the SFA's prescribed format, an updated Adult Community Learning Plan (the Plan) for 2012/13. This plan must take into account the likely level of available funding and also the wider development plan for the service.
8. The draft plan prior to approval is attached as Appendix 1 and can also be found at www.iwcommunitylearning.ac.uk

STRATEGIC CONTEXT

9. This plan supports the priorities of the Corporate Plan 2011-2013: supporting older and vulnerable residents by targeting resources at disadvantaged groups, raising educational standards through family learning programmes and regeneration and the economy through basic skills and qualifications.
10. The provision of adult community learning courses can offer residents the opportunity to return to learning in a non-threatening and supportive environment. Ultimately, this could improve their employability and life chances and allow them to play a full part in the life of their community. A strong supportive community can help to reduce the perception of and actual crime in their locality and enable people to feel included.
11. This plan additionally supports the Department of Business, Innovation and Skills New Challenges, New Chances: Further Education and Skills Reform Plan. The reform plan sets out clear aims and objectives for the £210 million Community Learning Budget in England and its intention to support a range of community learning trust pilot models. A community learning trust will work with local people and organisations to identify learning needs and work collaboratively with learning providers and partners to broker community learning and build a culture of lifelong learning.

CONSULTATION

12. Consultation on the plan is ongoing throughout the year. Specifically it has been undertaken with:
 - Officers of the Skills Funding Agency;
 - Isle of Wight Learning Network members;
 - Officers of Schools and Learning Division, Chief Executive's Department;
 - Elected members' at an adult learning themed briefing.
13. The consultation has ensured the key objectives of the plan support local priorities. The consultation process ensures that learning provision is not duplicated and opportunities for partnership working are developed. The plan supports the SFA's strategic objectives, continuing partnership working and curriculum development amongst the wider learning network.

FINANCIAL / BUDGET IMPLICATIONS

14. This plan is based on the funding allocation advised by the Skills Funding Agency in April 2012. Additionally the plan is supported by council revenue funding and projects.

EXPENDITURE

Skills Funding Agency – Adult Safeguarded Learning	264,187
Skills Funding Agency – Adult Skills Budget	55,485
Isle of Wight Council	172,632
Target course fees	27,000
TOTAL	519,304

CARBON EMISSIONS

15. There are no direct implications for the council's Carbon Management Plan. Emissions from buildings and staff travel are unlikely to increase over previous year.

LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

16. Having the Adult Community Learning Plan is a statutory requirement in order for the council to continue to receive grant funding from the Skills Funding Agency.

EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY

17. The Service is working to achieve the requirements of the Equality Act 2010, to promote equality of opportunity and eliminate discrimination. An equality impact assessment has been completed on the Adult Community Learning Plan (Appendix attached).
18. The service is committed to improving access to learning opportunities on the Isle of Wight and welcomes all learners. Within the Island context there are very real barriers preventing access to learning, transport, financial circumstances, childcare, personal confidence and self-esteem. We are working with learners and community partners to develop strategies that seek to remove these barriers for the individual. Following completion of the equality impact assessment the service will design programmes to encourage greater participation by male residents.

PROPERTY IMPLICATIONS

19. There are no additional property implications resulting from the Adult Community Learning Plan.

SECTION 17 CRIME AND DISORDER ACT 1998

20. The plan helps to support adults back into learning and so can be seen to have positive impacts with the community.

OPTIONS

- i. That the Isle of Wight Adult Community Learning Plan for 2012/13 be approved;
- ii. Suggest amendments to the drafted plan;
- iii. Reject the proposed plan;

RISK MANAGEMENT

21. The SFA funding is reliant on the delivery of the plan which has risks associated with it. These are known, assessed and managed through the council's risk management processes, and performance and quality systems used to deliver the services. The key risk is that the SFA wishes to implement a policy of minimum contract level of £500,000 which would result in the Isle of Wight Council not directly receiving grant funding. However, the Isle of Wight Council has received an exemption for the 2012/13 academic year to take consideration of the outcome of community learning trust pilots and Department of Business, Innovation and Skills reform plans which may see a rebalancing of funding levels across England. In order to mitigate against minimum contract level officers are exploring partnership opportunities with neighbouring local authorities.

EVALUATION

22. The proposed Adult Community Learning Plan has been drafted following consultation with principal stakeholders. It therefore seeks to address the needs and expectations of the Island as expressed by these stakeholders including the learners.
23. The plan represents further progression in the provision of high quality and learner focussed activities that have been developed in partnership with the SFA since its inception. It therefore meets the SFA's expectations of how these services will evolve in the coming academic year. Any significant changes to it will need to be negotiated with the SFA, who may choose not to accept and therefore fund the changes. In this instance it may also choose not to fund the balance of the programme, leaving the council to fund it directly or for it not to proceed.
24. If the council was to reject the plan completely the SFA may contract directly with an alternative provider of Adult Learning activities or refer to the secretary of state. The approach taken in the proposed plan is for a co-ordinated, balanced provision being delivered to a number of target groups and geographical areas by a range of providers across the Island. If the SFA was to contract with only one of these providers, then it is likely that the overall balance in provision would be lost.
25. The Adult Community Learning Service, secured by the council is subject to regular inspection by Ofsted. The service was inspected by Ofsted in May 2009 and judged to be Grade 2 Good with Family Learning programmes achieving Grade 1 Outstanding (the only family learning team in the country to achieve this grade at two consecutive inspections).

RECOMMENDATION

26. Option I - That the Isle of Wight Adult Community Learning Plan for 2012/13 be approved

APPENDICES ATTACHED

27. [APPENDIX 1](#) - The Adult Community Learning Plan can be viewed at:
[APPENDIX 2](#) - Equality impact assessment

BACKGROUND PAPERS

28. None

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STEVE BEYNON
Chief Executive

COUNCILLOR DAWN COUSINS
Cabinet Member for
Children's Services and Education

Decision

Signed

Date
